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*Henry VIII.* By A. F. POLLARD. (London and New York: Longmans, Green, and Company. 1905. Pp. xii, 470.)

THIS book is a new edition, revised, enlarged, and carefully annotated, of the sumptuous biography of Henry VIII. by the same author, published in 1902 by Messrs. Goupil and Company. There can be no doubt that the present compact volume will prove far more useful for purposes of historical study than its bulkier and far more expensive predecessor, which, though copiously illustrated and beautifully printed and bound, was totally lacking in foot-notes, index, and bibliographical references. Certainly Mr. Pollard has never produced a more scholarly and serviceable book than this. He has used to the fullest advantage the monumental collection of *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII.*, which is now nearing its completion, and yet on the other hand he has by no means neglected secondary authorities; he has an enviable background of general historical knowledge; his judgments are for the most part sane and consistent; and he writes clearly and convincingly. Occasionally he is led to use a phrase or title which may be regarded as out of place in a serious historical work; as, for example, when he labels the chapter dealing with the crucial events of 1533-1534 "The Prevailing of the Gates of Hell", but in general his style is such as to add force and picturesqueness to his narrative. As far as the present reviewer is able to discover, the volume is entirely free from misprints and minor errors.

There are a number of debatable points in the reign of Henry VIII., on which every student of history has a right to his own opinion; and Mr. Pollard's views on some of these will doubtless elicit criticism and perhaps contradiction from other laborers in the Tudor vineyard. He has already crossed swords with Dr. Gairdner on the very difficult subject of the character of the king himself. Dr. Gairdner maintains that the simplest explanation of Henry's extraordinary career is "that it was due to selfishness combined with a wonderful deal of diplomatic cunning", while Mr. Pollard asserts that the desire to see England great and prosperous had a large share in determining the king's action at every great crisis of the reign, that Henry shaped his personal ends so that they coincided with what was best for the nation as a whole. That the two foremost authorities on the Tudor period can disagree on a point as fundamental as this is a significant and perhaps not entirely discouraging fact for younger students of sixteenth-century history to reflect upon. Another even more important point on which Mr. Pollard's views will doubtless arouse contention is the very delicate question of Henry's relations with his Parliaments, especially the great Reformation Parliament of 1529-1536. Was the famous assembly which passed the acts that severed England from Rome packed and intimidated, or free? Mr. Pollard sturdily maintains the latter view; asserts that there is "nothing to show that Henry VIII. intimidated his Commons at any time, or that he packed the Parliament of 1529"; and,

be it added, materially strengthens his case by a skilful anticipation and refutation of the arguments of those who disagree with him. All that Mr. Pollard says in this matter must be treated with respect and will doubtless dispose of a good many of the extremer statements of those who disagree with him; yet on the other hand there can be little doubt that he sometimes overstates his own case. If, for example, freedom of speech and freedom from arrest for members of Parliament were "established" in 1512 and 1543 (p. 259), why was Peter Wentworth thrice imprisoned in the reign of Elizabeth?

ROGER BIGELOW MERRIMAN.

*Renascence Portraits.* By PAUL VAN DYKE, D.D., Professor in History, Princeton University. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1905. Pp. xiii, 425.)

THERE are portraits of all sorts and sizes, from miniatures by Sidney Cooper to equestrian figures of Philip IV. in the best manner of Velasquez. Dr. Van Dyke's studies of Aretino, Thomas Cromwell, and Maximilian I. are essays in criticism rather than biographical condensations and so belong to the domain of art. The author writes, as he tells us in a choice humanistic epigram, for the love of scholarship and to beguile the leisure of his friends. Such a phrase may to some minds suggest the sketches of an amateur and not the studied efforts of a professional. The present volume, however, is far from amateurish in either preparation or manner. We began by making an allusion to the scale of the performance. These three bits of historical delineation are more than miniatures and less than the heroic canvases of a conventional biographer. Without attempting to carry further the figure which is suggested by the title, each of the three papers here published is equivalent to a long article in an English quarterly, besides possessing other qualities which recall well-known papers in the *Edinburgh Review*.

Of all great epochs the Renascence demands from its historian the widest sympathy and the keenest discrimination. We would, at least, by some unqualified statement emphasize the variegated character of Quattrocento and Cinquecento, the element of paradox which enters into the career of every political or intellectual leader then living, the incredible freaks of psychology that tempt one to heighten his colors or darken his shadows. In each case, Dr. Van Dyke has selected a sharply articulated type. Aretino, Cromwell, and Maximilian were men whom it is very easy to caricature or to denounce. All had striking talents, and to these Cromwell added extraordinary force of will. Yet for a variety of reasons not one of the three evokes anything like genuine admiration from the modern world. Dr. Van Dyke has certainly made an interesting choice of figures, and he seldom strays far from his main purpose, which is neither to extol nor to extenuate, but to interpret.

Aretino, whether on intimate acquaintance he be liked or not, is worth understanding. We once heard a professor of history who should have known better speak about him as though he were a Celtic decadent